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# STRENGTHENING UGANDA'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND RECOVERY TO COVID-19 PROJECT

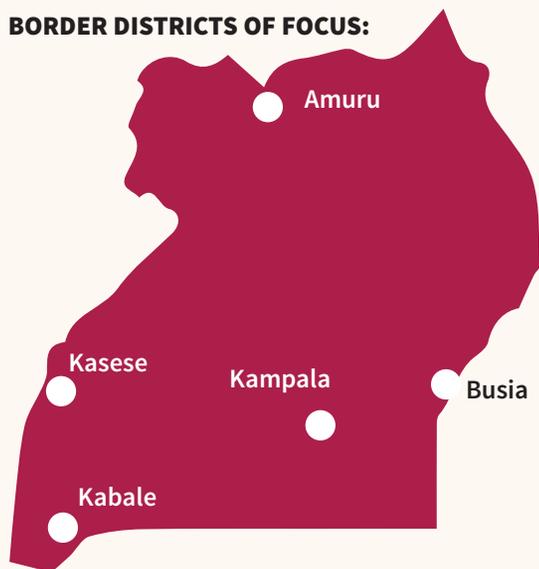


## ABOUT THE PROJECT:

UNDP Uganda, in partnership with the National Emergency Coordination and Operation Center (NECOC), with the financial support from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, have begun efforts to support the ongoing management of COVID-19 and building resilience capacity under the coordination of the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda (OPM) through the 'Strengthening Uganda's Emergency Response and Recovery to COVID-19 Project. This project will be instrumental in enhancing the national response to multi-hazard induced disasters with benefits that stretch beyond COVID-19, including optimizing the efficiency of systemic processes within NECOC and its regional, district and supportive cross border mechanisms.

This project focuses on vulnerable communities living on Uganda's border exposed to high risks of contracting the disease due to their proximity to transport hubs. The emergence of these border hotspots has created the need for increased surveillance to ensure a timelier response in natural or public health emergencies.

## BORDER DISTRICTS OF FOCUS:



## APPROACH AND FOCUS AREAS

### PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The framework of ongoing support between UNDP Uganda and the OPM has three major priorities and four areas of investment:

**Strengthen evidence-based decision making to enable coordinated prioritization of resources towards the most impactful control efforts**



**Expand risk mitigation efforts to decrease health and social-economic shocks caused by the pandemic**



**Build up local institutional capabilities in response to COVID-19 and future emergencies, including epidemics or pandemics**



## POLICY, PLANNING AND BUDGETING

**Deepening communications channels:** This programme rollout aims to support the OPM for enhanced coordination of responses to disasters across sectors, ministries, departments, agencies, and local governments. The support to OPM will also identify critical communication needs and limitations followed by the launch of a strategic engagement process for all key actors.



**Streamlining multi-sector planning:** The investment will provide technical advice to the OPM for leadership for coordinated multi-sector planning, forecasting response needs, effective management, and utilization of stimulus packages from Government and development partners. With it, local capabilities to respond to current and future emergencies will expand. In addition, given the high refugee and cross-border migration from



neighbouring countries, the programme aims to ramp up the Government COVID-19 response capacity, therefore alleviating some strains put on the health care systems.

**Facilitating test expansion:** Deliverables will also address the Ministry of Health (MOH) request to build on the technical support given by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI). UVRI serves as the only centre in the country to expand urgently needed testing capabilities specifically for cross-border long-distance truck drivers. The focus will be given to strengthening the information flows between the sub-national and national arms of the NECOC through test analysis.



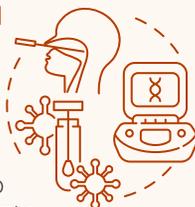
**Safeguarding vulnerable communities:** UVRI is a national institution and a regional partner for the foundation 'TB, HIV and Global Health Research and Development' - a subsidiary of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. These initiatives also work to strengthen the capacity for future emergency preparedness. Considering Uganda's current policy on refugees, it is estimated that the influx of refugees will continue to create ongoing demand for COVID-19 testing capabilities. Therefore, this investment will contribute to the prevention and containment of COVID-19, alleviate suffering, and protect the most vulnerable populations - including refugees, host communities, subsistence farmers, children, women, and persons in transit.



**EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

To implement the targets outlined by the UNDP framework agreement with the OPM, and to further optimize systemic processes within NECOC, this programme aims to achieve the following goals:

**Expand capacity for COVID-19 testing and increase border surveillance in Kampala City, high-risk cross border points, and transportation corridors:**



- Resources will be channeled towards providing rapid assessments to gauge levels of COVID-19 in Uganda. This action will supplement the vital community assessment work already taking place in the country.
- Investment - both financial and intellectual- will contribute to pandemic prevention and containment targeted at vulnerable communities. Reinforcements will be provided to border committees for more effective surveillance. This will include cross-border capacity building for analysis and will produce important lessons for related disasters such as Ebola, locusts, floods, drought, etc.
- This support will leverage UNDP's past and ongoing investment in activating NECOC, including the current efforts to equip its district, regional and border support mechanisms.

**Strengthen national coordination capacities for emergency response and recovery with a robust Knowledge Management System for the NECOC:**



- UNDP will support creating a more vigorous and updated early warning system to promote resilient infrastructures. This blueprint will be housed within NECOC and mapped on the national and local levels.
- UNDP technical teams will contribute to the establishment of a bespoke epidemic preparedness, response, and recovery system through harnessing synergies across sectors and actors. Through this work, Uganda will have significantly improved its long-term ability to manage emergencies while building its best practices, insights, and partnerships.

**Establish a Think Tank to further curate vital information from the emergency response and coordination ecosystem:**



- UNDP will fortify pathways for strengthening risk management by forming a Think Tank comprised of critical experts to further provide support to NECOC. Specialists will consult on the economic and governmental impacts of the pandemic.
- This Think Tank will have an auxiliary team of eight researchers from Makerere University supported by eight research grants. UNDP will also provide a Senior Gender Advisor who will ensure gender analysis is integrated into all policy and programmatic work produced by the Think Tank and NECOC (ie: policy briefs, academic articles, etc.).
- A small interdisciplinary portion of the Think Tank will function in-house at the OPM. This will secure those consistent independent analyses is provided quickly to improve governmental response times. Such support will foster heightened knowledge management and policymaking for a stronger national resilience disaster risk.

**PROJECT COST**



**IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS**

